

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



This document is one section from the EPA's Targeted Watershed Grants 2005 Annual Report published in December 2005. The reference number is EPA 840-R-06-001. You can find the entire document at <http://www.epa.gov/twg>

# EPA'S TARGETED WATERSHED GRANTS 2005 ANNUAL REPORT

## Capacity Building Grantees

December 2005



# Capacity Building Grantees

## COOPERATIVE CONSERVATION AT WORK

In addition to supporting community-driven watershed projects through Targeted Watershed Grants (TWG), EPA also supports developing and disseminating tools, training, and technical assistance to strengthen the effectiveness of community-based partnerships. In 2003, EPA awarded approximately \$2.1 million, spread over three years, in training and education grants to five leading organizations. The grant goals are to teach local watershed groups critical skills necessary to improve watershed health. The five awards, which varied in funding levels, reflect models at the national, regional, and state levels. Their success illustrates the powerful potential of collaborative watershed partnerships to achieve environmental improvements. Recognizing the high return on these modest investments, the Agency plans to increase funds for capacity building. The specific goal of these grants is to better serve both the needs of the thousands of local watershed groups working for cleaner water across the country, and the statewide, regional, and national organizations that support them.

## CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTEES

- **The Center for Watershed Protection** is a national organization dedicated to the protection and restoration of watersheds by advancing effective land and water management techniques.
- **The International City/County Management Association (ICMA)** is a professional and educational association for appointed administrators in local government, serving nearly 8,000 members worldwide.
- **The River Network**, a national organization founded in 1989, assists grassroots river and watershed groups by providing watershed training, capacity building resources, networking, and consultation services.
- **The Southeast Watershed Forum** is dedicated to building the capacity of individuals, organizations, and communities to better protect land and water resources in a nine state region.
- **The University of Alaska Anchorage – Resource Solutions** develops and conducts skill-building workshops to facilitate watershed projects that benefit both water quality and economic development in rural Alaska.





# The Center for Watershed Protection

Using EPA's capacity building grant, the Center for Watershed Protection (CWP) conducted seven Watershed Institutes for practitioners from across the country, reaching a broad mix of local officials, government agencies, and watershed groups. Designed to equip leaders with the skills, tools, and confidence to assess, design, and implement effective programs in their home watersheds, the Institute combines classroom time, design exercises, and field visits. When the formal training ends, the learning continues for the organizations in their home watersheds through consultations and extensive online resources.

Milestones in CWP's Institute training include:

- Leveraged more than \$1.5 million in local watershed implementation activity for groups across the country
- Generated 110 new programs on watershed restoration, protection, and stormwater management techniques
- Trained more than 800 watershed professionals
- Generated 14,000 person hours of training
- Matched over \$400,000 of non-federal funds to conduct the Institutes

After graduating, members of the Upper Neuse River Basin Association used their new skills in planning and restoration to develop a comprehensive watershed plan for Little Lick Creek. This effort brought together experienced partners from local governments and the North Carolina Ecosystem Enhancement Program. Working with the City of Durham, the partners successfully linked watershed assessments to infrastructure maintenance programs, illicit discharge enforcement measures, stormwater program requirements, and the development of regional indices for stream quality. Restoration projects are now being prioritized.

The Bronx River Alliance (BRA) worked with CWP to build their technical capacity in identifying watershed restoration projects. Working with CWP, the alliance organized and interpreted data from field assessments to generate candidate restoration opportunities and identify next steps for implementation.



Institute participants learn methods to assess stream health, such as identifying insects that live in streams.

**"I learned how to think about my watershed work in a totally new way. I have been so focused on water quality improvement and remediation projects that I never thought about how land conservation and the health of my forests affect my streams. I now have a much more holistic perspective."**

**– Watershed Institute Participant**





# The International City/County Management Association (ICMA)

With capacity building funding from EPA, ICMA conducted training for about 200 community leaders and local government officials through successful webcasts broadcast live over the Internet. These interactive training programs emphasized consensus-building skills as well as conservation financing for watershed and wetlands protection – critical skills necessary for successful watershed planning and management.



Each webcast attracted more than 100 participants from around the country.

ICMA's first webcast – Collaborative Problem Solving and Consensus Building: Effective

Approaches for Watershed Protection and Restoration – introduced participants to the principles of collaboration, conflict resolution, and consensus building. The program featured an expert from the University of Virginia's Institute for Environmental Negotiation and local watershed leaders. The webcast successfully provided information and tools, shared lessons learned, and assisted in the delivery of effective watershed management strategies.

The second webcast – Protecting Water Resources through Land Conservation: Funding Options for Local Governments – developed in collaboration with the Trust for Public Lands showcased local government success stories. Attendees gained an understanding of current conservation finance trends, revenue sources being used by local governments, voter opinions on water protection, and the importance of good performance measures in designing funding campaigns.



ICMA is also developing a Web-based curriculum for watershed groups and plans to deliver the information at various local government forums. A CD-ROM and other resources have been developed to supplement the webcast training. To order a copy of the CD-ROM, contact LGEAN at 877/TO-LGEAN or [lgean@icmb.org](mailto:lgean@icmb.org) or visit [www.lgean.org](http://www.lgean.org).

**"Webcast participants gained an understanding of current conservation finance trends, revenue sources being used by local governments, voter opinions on water protection, and the importance of good performance measures in designing funding campaigns."**

**– Barbara Yuhas  
ICMA**





# The River Network

The River Network's Watershed Support Network (WSN) represents a model collaborative approach – bringing together state, regional, and local partners to form a formidable cadre of expert watershed trainers. Last year, the network used EPA funds and other leveraged resources to provide intensive watershed training programs in six states. These programs included more than 175 watershed groups and one-on-one support services for 94 organizations in Colorado, Kentucky, New Mexico, Ohio, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

The watershed groups served by the Watershed Support Network are making a profound difference in water quality conditions. Examples of the improvements include:

- 40 percent reduction in acid mine drainage from the Majestic Mine into the Hocking River (Ohio)
- Improved basinwide sewage plan for the Big Darby, a watershed highly valued for its ecological diversity (Ohio)
- Improvements in the Bad River, including improved fish passages and instream flows thanks to the repair and replacement of 1,000 culverts identified by citizen volunteers (Wisconsin)
- Pollutant reductions in the Gallinas and Rio Grande tributaries, which has made the water safer for swimming and human use (New Mexico)

Participants learned concrete skills that dramatically strengthened their effectiveness. The groups increased and diversified their funding sources, raised membership, leveraged additional dollars (including corporate sponsors), built community support, learned to utilize vital financial and strategic planning tools; and learned technical skills like monitoring and assessment. Representatives from 14 states graduated as skilled watershed trainers.



The first group of watershed trainers from six states that kicked off the Watershed Support Network.

**EPA's support for River Network's capacity building program has allowed us to establish a new, collaborative model for watershed assistance. By increasing the strength and stability of watershed partnerships, this program will result in measurable improvements in hundreds of watersheds across the nation in the next few years."**

**– Don Elder  
President and CEO  
River Network**





# The Southeast Watershed Forum

## Train-the-Trainer Academy

Using EPA funds, the Southeast Watershed Forum hosted a highly successful Watershed Leadership Train-the-Trainer Academy – an intensive, 3-day course covering watershed protection and assessment, best management practices, community consensus building and conflict resolution – all aimed at protecting water quality and supplies through wiser land use practices. Every attendee was required to commit to training a minimum of four other groups in their community; thereby reaching more than 5,000 additional watershed leaders and practitioners.

## Growth Readiness Workshops

In addition, the forum hosted 27 Growth Readiness workshops reaching 80 communities in four states, with communities in four additional states slated to receive training in 2005 and 2006. These workshops are helping city and county planners, stormwater managers, and municipal officials design best management practices and growth patterns that will protect their local rivers, lakes, and groundwater as well as comply with EPA Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and Stormwater Phase II regulations.

Thanks to the Southeast Watershed Forum, 110 local leaders are actively involved in fostering watershed-friendly land use practices throughout the Southeast. Examples of trainer outcomes include:

- A county-wide watershed permitting program (NC)
- A bay-wide nutrient management partnership (FL)
- Source water protection provisions in county comprehensive plans (VA)
- New riparian conservation easements (GA)
- New state requirements to review water quality monitoring programs from major new developments to ensure compatibility with the Total Maximum Daily Load process. (FL)



The staff and graduates from the Southeast Watershed Forum's 2004 Watershed Leadership Train-the-Trainer Academy include representatives from cities, counties, watershed groups, land trusts, regional planning agencies, RC&D Councils, Soil and Water Conservation Districts and state and federal agencies.

**"Initial estimates show that nearly 140 cities, counties and townships evaluated development rules and identified changes to reduce the impact of growth on local water resources."**

**– Christine Olsenius  
Southeast  
Watershed Forum**





# The University of Alaska, Anchorage

Using EPA Capacity Building Grant funds, the University of Alaska Anchorage, Resource Solutions set out to build a diverse network of skilled leaders from government agencies, Alaskan native communities, environmental groups, and development interests to promote a more sustainable economy and environment.



A diverse group of stakeholders gathered at the Sustainable Partnership Workshop.

Among its accomplishments, the university developed and conducted a successful workshop, Building Sustainable Partnerships, which strengthened collaborative problem solving capabilities and fostered community-based watershed efforts. Workshop participants represented three geographic sections of Alaska, including areas with large new gold mining developments and a remote area renowned for its world-class salmon fishery. This fishing area, located in a small rural village in southwest Alaska (population 600), is known to attract up to 30,000 visitors monthly. The area has no public restrooms or sanitation systems. Because of its remote location, state camping regulations are rarely enforced. Consequently, public health issues, including hepatitis, are a growing concern for the local community.

## Outcomes of the Sustainable Partnership Workshop:

- A remote southwest Alaska village agreed to pursue a grant for the upcoming fishing season in order to institute a "honeybucket" system, whereby visitors would be given a bucket upon their arrival and provided instructions for how to safely dispose of waste.
- A dialogue with local community members was initiated to share information in areas where extensive gold mining exploration activities are occurring.
- A Watershed Steering Committee was formed to guide community-based restoration efforts. The committee held their first regional meeting in Bethel, Alaska in September 2005.



Jane Oakley facilitates a break-out session at the workshop.

**"It was great – the Corps of Engineers said they wanted to sign an MOU for a project that helps us share mapping data across the Kenai Peninsula."**

**– Robert Ruffner  
Executive Director  
Kenai Watershed  
Forum**